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ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT: COMPOSITION OF THE SECRETARIAT

Improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat

Report of the Secretary-General

Corrigendum

Replace paragraphs 32-35 with the following text:

V. CONCLUSION

32. The goals set for the equal representation of men and women in the Secretariat are central to the objective of enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the Organization. They stem from the recognition of the value added that a diversified, gender-balanced and representative Secretariat can bring to the United Nations. Decision-making and other work processes in the Organization can only benefit from the essential and unique perspective that women bring to the Secretariat. The Secretary-General's firm commitment to achieving gender equality has translated into several important initiatives and decisions to improve the status of women in the Secretariat. Statistics show an increase in the number of women at all levels of representation, while the United Nations work environment has been adapted to promote and safeguard the value of a workforce equally open to qualified men and women. Various measures and programmes to bring about gender equality, and improve the status of General Service staff, the majority of whom are women, have been pursued over the last decade. The guiding target of achieving equality in gender distribution overall by the year 2000, however, remains problematic.

33. In some areas, particularly at higher levels, the representation of women is still very low. The Secretary-General and Member States must continue to work together to ensure that qualified women are identified and given the

opportunity to serve in the Secretariat, particularly in senior positions. Together, they must champion the vision of a workforce capable of growing professionally and in which all individuals can contribute fully to the Organization without hindrance. Women are 51 per cent of the global population and must be allowed to contribute fully to the Organization if the United Nations is to represent the world in all its diversity.

34. The Secretary-General will continue to pursue vigorously the goals set by the General Assembly with respect to the improvement of the status of women. The target of 35 per cent overall representation for women in posts subject to geographical distribution has now been achieved. The continued financial crisis has added considerably to the difficulties being faced in meeting the goal of 50/50 gender distribution by the year 2000. The General Assembly may, therefore, wish to consider setting intermediate targets for women in posts subject to geographical distribution, such as 37 per cent by 1997 and 41 per cent by 1999. As for women in senior decision-making levels, while the target of 25 per cent has not yet been achieved, it should continue to be a guiding factor. The Organization's ongoing efforts at achieving gender equality and other efforts to bring about a more diverse and equitable geographical representation are complementary, and should be pursued together as mutually beneficial goals.

35. The next century should find the Organization at the forefront of gender issues. As part of their commitment to gender equality in the Secretariat, Member States need to collaborate with the Secretary-General in identifying the means and resources for reaching those objectives. As noted above, the financial crisis has added to the difficulties being faced in meeting some numerical targets that have been set. The Secretary-General will nevertheless continue to pursue these targets with vigour and determination. He is being assisted in this overall effort by his Special Adviser on Gender Issues. Every effort will also continue to be exercised to make the Secretariat work environment one that will harness the energies and creativity of women to find, along with their male colleagues, effective approaches to address the challenges before the international community. A work environment that provides full opportunities for women and men to pursue their careers with confidence, work ethics and professional loyalty can only serve to renew and invigorate the global Secretariat in the service of the international community.
